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ON THE GOODNESS OF THE SUPREME BEING.

A POETICAL ESSAY.

K

By CHRISTOPHER SMART, M.A.
Of *Pembroke-Hall* in the Univerſity of *Cambridge*.

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M.DCC.LVI.

MUDDIMAN

Of Pembroke-Hall in the University of CAMBRIDGE.

By CHRISTOPHER SMART, M.A.

A POETICAL ESSAY

ON THE

SOLEMN BEING

OF THE

GOODNESS

OF GOD.

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

THE

EARL of DARLINGTON,

THIS ESSAY

ON

The Goodneſs of the Supreme Being,

IS INSCRIBED,

By His LORDSHIP's

moſt obliged

and obedient Servant

C. SMART.

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and obedient Servant,

C. SMART.

A Clauſe of Mr. SEATON's Will,

Dated *Oct.* 8. 1738.

I Give my Kiſlingbury Eſtate to the Univerſity of Cambridge for ever: the Rents of which ſhall be diſpoſed of yearly by the Vice-Chancellor for the time being, as he the Vice-Chancellor, the Maſter of Clare-Hall, and the Greek Profeſſor for the time being, or any two them ſhall agree. Which three perſons aforeſaid ſhall give out a Subject, which Subject ſhall for the firſt Year be one or other of the Perfections or Attributes of the Supreme Being, and ſo the ſucceeding Years, till the Subject is exhauſted; and afterwards the Subject ſhall be either Death, Judgment, Heaven, Hell, Purity of heart, &c. or whatever elſe may be judged by the Vice-Chancellor, Maſter of Clare-Hall, and Greek Profeſſor to be moſt conducive to the honour of the Supreme Being and recommendation of Virtue. And they ſhall yearly diſpoſe of the Rent of the above Eſtate to that Maſter of Arts, whoſe Poem on the Subject given ſhall be beſt approved by them. Which Poem I ordain to be always in Engliſh, and to be printed; the expence of which ſhall be deducted out of the product of the Eſtate, and the reſidue given as a reward for the Compoſer of the Poem, or Ode, or Copy of Verſes.

WE the underwritten, do aſſign Mr. SEATON's Reward to Mr. C. SMART, M.A. for his Poem on *The Goodneſs of the Supreme Being*, and direct the ſaid Poem to be printed, according to the tenor of the Will.

Oct. 28. 1755.

H. Thomas Vice-Chancellor.
J. Wilcox Maſter of Clare-Hall.

ON THE GOODNESS OF THE SUPREME BEING.

ORPHEUS, for *ſo the Gentiles call'd thy name,
Iſrael's ſweet Pſalmiſt, who alone couldſt wake
Th' inanimate to motion; who alone
The joyful hillocks, the applauding rocks,
And floods with muſical perſuaſion drew;
Thou who to hail and ſnow gav'ſt voice and ſound,
And mad'ſt the mute melodious! — greater yet
Was thy divineſt ſkill, and rul'd o'er more
Than art and nature; for thy tuneful touch
Drove trembling Satan from the heart of Saul,

* See this conjecture ſtrongly ſupported by *Delany*, in his *Life of David*.

And

And quell'd the evil Angel: — in this breaſt
Some portion of thy genuine ſpirit breathe,
And lift me from myſelf, each thought impure
Baniſh; each low idea raiſe, refine,
Enlarge, and ſanctify; — ſo ſhall the muſe
Above the ſtars aſpire, and aim to praiſe
Her God on earth, as he is prais'd in heaven.
Immenſe Creator! whoſe all-pow'rful hand
Fram'd univerſal Being, and whoſe Eye
Saw like thyſelf, that all things form'd were good;
Where ſhall the tim'rous bard thy praiſe begin,
Where end the pureſt ſacrifice of ſong,
And juſt thankſgiving? — The thought-kindling light,
Thy prime production, darts upon my mind
Its vivifying beams, my heart illumines,
And fills my ſoul with gratitude and Thee.
Hail to the chearful rays of ruddy morn,
That paint the ſtreaky Eaſt, and blithſome rouſe
The birds, the cattle, and mankind from reſt!
Hail to the freſhneſs of the early breeze,

And Iris dancing on the new-fall'n dew!
Without the aid of yonder golden globe
Loſt were the garnet's luſtre, loſt the lilly,
The tulip and auricula's ſpotted pride;
Loſt were the peacock's plumage, to the ſight
So pleaſing in its pomp and gloſſy glow.
O thrice-illuſtrious! were it not for thee
Thoſe panſies, that reclining from the bank,
View thro' th' immaculate, pellucid ſtream
Their portraiture in the inverted heaven,
Might as well change their triple boaſt, the white,
The purple, and the gold, that far outvie
The Eaſtern monarch's garb, ev'n with the dock,
Ev'n with the baneful hemlock's irkſome green.
Without thy aid, without thy gladſome beams
The tribes of woodland warblers wou'd remain
Mute on the bending branches, nor recite
The praiſe of him, who, e'er he form'd their lord,
Their voices tun'd to tranſport, wing'd their flight,
And bade them call for nurture, and receive;

And lo! they call; the blackbird and the thruſh,
The woodlark, and the redbreaſt jointly call;
He hears and feeds their feather'd families,
He feeds his ſweet muſicians, — nor neglects
Th' invoking ravens in the greenwood wide;
And tho' their throats coarſe ruttling hurt the ear,
They mean it all for muſic, thanks and praiſe
They mean, and leave ingratitude to man, —
But not to all, — for hark the organs blow
Their ſwelling notes round the cathedral's dome,
And grace th' harmonious choir, celeſtial feaſt
To pious ears, and med'cine of the mind;
The thrilling trebles and the manly baſe
Join in accordance meet, and with one voice
All to the ſacred ſubject ſuit their ſong.
While in each breaſt ſweet melancholy reigns
Angelically penſive, till the joy
Improves and purifies; — the ſolemn ſcene
The Sun thro' ſtoried panes ſurveys with awe,
And baſhfully with-holds each bolder beam.

Here, as her home, from morn to eve frequents
The cherub Gratitude; — behold her Eyes!
With love and gladneſs weepingly they ſhed
Extatic ſmiles; the incenſe, that her hands
Uprear, is ſweeter than the breath of May
Caught from the nectarine's bloſſom, and her voice
Is more than voice can tell; to him ſhe ſings,
To him who feeds, who clothes and who adorns,
Who made and who preſerves, whatever dwells
In air, in ſtedfaſt earth or fickle ſea.
O He is good, he is immenſely good!
Who all things form'd and form'd them all for man;
Who mark'd the climates, varied every zone,
Diſpenſing all his bleſſings for the beſt
In order and in beauty: — riſe, attend,
Atteſt, and praiſe, ye quarters of the world!
Bow down, ye elephants, ſubmiſſive bow
To him, who made the mite; tho' Aſia's pride,
Ye carry armies on your tow'r-crown'd backs,
And grace the turban'd tyrants, bow to him

Who

Who is as great, as perfect and as good
In his leſs-ſtriking wonders, till at length
The eye's at fault and ſeeks th' aſſiſting glaſs.
Approach and bring from Araby the bleſt
The fragrant caſſia, frankincenſe and myrrh,
And meekly kneeling at the altar's foot
Lay all the tributary incenſe down.
Stoop, ſable Africa, with rev'rence ſtoop,
And from thy brow take off the painted plume;
With golden ingots all thy camels load
T' adorn his temples, haſten with thy ſpear
Reverted, and thy truſty bow unſtrung,
While unpurſu'd thy lions roam and roar,
And ruin'd tow'rs, rude rocks and caverns wide
Remurmur to the glorious, ſurly ſound.
And thou, fair Indian, whoſe immenſe domain
To counterpoiſe the Hemiſphere extends,
Haſte from the Weſt, and with thy fruits and flow'rs,
Thy mines and med'cines, wealthy maid, attend.
More than the plenteouſneſs ſo fam'd to flow

By fabling bards from Amalthea's horn
Is thine; thine therefore be a portion due
Of thanks and praiſe: come with thy brilliant crown
And veſt of furr; and from thy fragrant lap
Pomegranates and the rich †ananas pour.
But chiefly thou, Europa, ſeat of grace
And Chriſtian excellence, his goodneſs own,
Forth from ten thouſand temples pour his praiſe;
Clad in the armour of the living God
Approach, unſheath the ſpirit's flaming ſword;
Faith's ſhield, Salvation's glory, — compaſs'd helm
With fortitude aſſume, and o'er your heart
Fair truth's invulnerable breaſt-plate ſpread;
Then join the general chorus of all worlds,
And let the ſong of charity begin
In ſtrains ſeraphic, and melodious pray'r.
" O all-ſufficient, all-beneficent,
" Thou God of Goodneſs and of glory, hear!
" Thou, who to lowlieſt minds doſt condeſcend,

† Ananas the Indian name for Pine-Apples.

" Aſſuming

" Aſſuming paſſions to enforce thy laws,
" Adopting jealouſy to prove thy love:
" Thou, who reſign'd humility uphold,
" Ev'n as the floriſt props the drooping roſe,
" But quell tyrannic pride with peerleſs pow'r,
" Ev'n as the tempeſt rives the ſtubborn oak:
" O all-ſufficient, all-beneficent,
" Thou God of goodneſs and of glory hear!
" Bleſs all mankind, and bring them in the end
" To heav'n, to immortality, and THEE!

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FINIS.

BOOKS written by Mr. SMART, and sold by Mr. *Newbery*.

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To be continued Monthly.

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